Refund of excess Railway Freight

*567. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA :

SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the excess freight to the tune of Rs. 28 crores recovered by the South Eastern Railway, Kolkata, from the Gujarat Electricity Board, is to be refunded;

(b) if so, since when the matter is pending;

(c) by when the amount would be refunded to the Gujarat Electricity Board;

(d) whether the 15 per cent surcharge levied on the "To Pay" rakes, not indented by Gujarat Electricity Board for the period from October, 1997 to October, 1998, is to be refunded; and

(e) if so, by when; if not the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : (a) to (c) The papers of refund claims of Rs. 28 crores approximately filed earlier by the Gujarat Electricity Board with the South Eastern Railway had got destroyed in a fire in Railway's Refund Office on 4-7-1999. An amount of Rs. 1.36 crore had been paid before 4-7-1999. Claims for the balance amount were re-submitted in February, 2000 and are under verfication. No refund is being allowed now on these cases as the claims found admissible would get adjusted against the outstanding amounts payable by the Gujarat Electricity Board to the Railways. This is a continuous process.

(d) No Sir.

(e) Does not arise. Railway levy 'To-pay' surcharge of 15% when freight for the coal consignment is not paid at the booking station or under any of the approved mode of payment.

Discrimination against the farmers in WTO Agreement

*568. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the WTO agreement is very discriminatory against the farmers of developing countries, as it is against the farmers of developed countries;